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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

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1. (Currently amended) An image editing apparatus which joins ~~joins~~ a plurality of images in time, comprising:

a recording device which records a plurality of images associated with image related information including at least one of a shooting date and time, a shooting condition, a shooting place, and a user name;

a video effect recording device which records image related information associated with a video effect during image switching;

a comparison device which reads first image related information about a first image recorded in the recording device and second image related information about a second image recorded in the recording device, and compares the image related information about the first and second images;

a video effect selection device which reads from the video effect recording device a video effect ~~during image switching~~ according to matching image related information ~~when there is the matching image related information~~ between the image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison;

an image joining device which reads the first and second images recorded in the recording device, and automatically joins the images by applying the video effect ~~during image switching~~ read by the video effect selection device to a portion in which the images are to be joined in time; and

an output device which outputs the joined images.

2. (Currently amended) An image editing apparatus which joins ~~joins~~ a plurality of images in time, comprising:

a recording medium loading unit which loads a recording device for recording a plurality of images associated with image related information including at least one of a shooting date and time, a shooting condition, a shooting place, and a user name;

a video effect recording device which records a range of image related information associated with a video effect during image switching;

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a comparison device which reads first image related information about a first image recorded in the recording device and second image related information about a second image recorded in the recording device, and compares the image related information about the first and second images;

a video effect selection device which reads from the video effect recording device a video effect ~~during image switching~~ according to image related information similar in a predetermined range ~~when there is image related information similar in a predetermined range~~ between the image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison;

an image joining device which reads the first and second images recorded in the recording device, and automatically joins the images by applying the video effect ~~during image switching~~ read by the video effect selection device to a portion in which the images are to be joined in time; and

an output device which outputs the joined images.

3. (Currently amended) An image editing apparatus which joins ~~joins~~ a plurality of images in time, comprising:

a recording device which records a plurality of images associated with image related information including at least one of a shooting date and time, a shooting condition, a shooting place, and a user name;

a video effect recording device which records a range of image related information associated with a video effect during image switching;

a comparison device which reads first image related information about a first image recorded in the recording device and second image related information about a second image recorded in the recording device, and compares the image related information about the first and second images;

a video effect selection device which reads from the video effect recording device a video effect ~~during image switching~~ according to image related information similar in a predetermined range ~~when there is image related information similar in a predetermined range~~ between the

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image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison;

an image joining device which reads the first and second images recorded in the recording device, and automatically joins the images by applying the video effect ~~during image switching~~ read by the video effect selection device to a portion in which the images are to be joined in time; and

an output device which outputs the joined images.

4. (Currently amended) A programmable storage medium tangibly embodying a program of machine-readable instructions executable by a digital processing apparatus to perform an image editing method, said method comprising:

~~An image editing program for use in an image editing apparatus having a recording device which records a plurality of images associated with image related information including at least one of a shooting date and time, a shooting condition, a shooting place, and a user name, a video effect recording device which records a range of image related information associated with a video effect during image switching, a comparison device which compares image related information about a first image with image related information about a second image, a video effect selection device which reads from the video effect recording device a video effect ~~during image switching~~ depending on a comparison result, an image joining device which joins a first image with a second image by applying the video effect ~~during image switching~~ to the first and second images, an output device which outputs the joined images, and an information processing device which controls the recording device, the video effect recording device, the comparison device, the video effect selection device, the image joining device, and the output device, the image editing program comprising the steps of:~~

reading in the comparison device first image related information about a first image recorded in the recording device and second image related information about a second image recorded in the recording device, and comparing the image related information about the first and second images;

reading in the video effect selection device from the video effect recording device

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a video effect ~~during image switching~~ according to image related information similar in a predetermined range ~~when there is image related information similar in a predetermined range~~ between the image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison;

reading the first and second images recorded in the recording device, and automatically joining in the image joining device the images by applying the video effect ~~during image switching~~ read by the video effect selection device to a portion in which the images are to be joined in time; and

outputting in the output device the joined images.

5. (Currently amended) An image editing method, comprising: ~~for use~~

in an image editing apparatus having a recording device which records a plurality of images associated with image related information including at least one of a shooting date and time, a shooting condition, a shooting place, and a user name, a video effect recording device which records a range of image related information associated with a video effect during image switching, a comparison device which compares image related information about a first image with image related information about a second image, a video effect selection device which reads from the video effect recording device a video effect ~~during image switching~~ depending on a comparison result, an image joining device which joins a first image with a second image by applying the video effect ~~during image switching~~ to the first and second images, and an output device which outputs the joined images, ~~comprising the steps of:~~

reading first image related information about a first image recorded in the recording device and second image related information about a second image recorded in the recording device, and comparing the image related information about the first and second images, in the comparison device;

reading in the video effect selection device from the video effect recording device a video effect ~~during image switching~~ according to image related information similar in a predetermined range ~~when there is image related information similar in a predetermined range~~

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between the image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison;

reading the first and second images recorded in the recording device, and ~~automatically joining the images by applying the video effect during image switching~~ read by the video effect selection device to a portion in which the images are to be joined in time, in the image joining device; and

outputting in the output device the joined images.

6. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, wherein said plurality of images recorded in said recording device comprises an image file including at least one of a primary image of a moving picture in an image recording format, a thumbnail image for listing the primary image, and image related information about the primary image.

7. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 6, wherein a portion of said image file which stores said image related information comprises at least one of a capturing date on which the primary image was captured, a capturing time, a name of said image editing apparatus, a frame of said captured image, information about a zoom position when said image was captured, and information relating to a user of said image editing apparatus.

8. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 6, wherein said image recording format comprises one of Motion-JPEG format and MPEG format.

9. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, wherein said video effect selection device further reads from the video effect recording device:

a video effect according to image related information similar in a predetermined range when there is image related information similar in a predetermined range between the image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison; and

a video effect according to no matching image related information when there is no

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matching image related information between the image related information about the first and second images as a result of the comparison.

10. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
an input device comprising a mode switch for putting said image editing apparatus in an image editing mode.
11. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:
an input device for selecting images to be edited from among said plurality of images.
12. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:
a display device for displaying a list of images, a user using said input device to select plural images from said displayed list of images to be edited.
13. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, wherein said video effect recording device comprises a table including a list of said image related information and a video effect associated with said image related information.
14. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 13, wherein said image related information is included in said list in order of priority.
15. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 13, wherein said comparison device compares first image related information for said first and second images,
wherein if said first image related information for said first image matches said first image information for said second image, said video effect selection device selects said video effect associated with said first image related information and terminates a video effect selection process, and
wherein if said first image related information for said first image does not match said

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first image related information for said second image, said comparison device compares second image related information for said first and second images.

16. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 15, wherein said second image related information has a lower priority than said first image related information.
17. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, wherein said image joining device joins said images by automatically applying said video effect during image switching.
18. (New) The image editing apparatus of claim 1, wherein said image editing apparatus comprises one of an electronic camera, a personal computer, a mobile telephone, and a personal digital assistant (PDA).